

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

This is a submission accompanying an RCE and serves as a response to the final Office Action dated March 15, 2007.

The final Office Action of March 15, 2007 has been carefully considered. Claims 1-96 and 107-130 are pending in the present application with claims 1, 39, 66, 96, 107, 108, 109, 110, 122, 123 and 127 being in independent form. Claims 97-106 were previously withdrawn. By the present Amendment, independent claims 1, 39, 66, 96, 107, 108, 109, 110, 122, 123 and 127 have been amended in order to clarify the features of the present application.

Claims 1-26, 29-36, 38-63, 65-87, 90-93, 95-96 and 107-130 remain rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as allegedly being anticipated U.S. Patent Publication No. 2002/0023853 to Lax et al. ("Lax"). Claims 27-28 and 88-89 remain rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Lax. Reconsideration of these rejections is respectfully requested.

Applicants appreciate the courtesy extended to Applicants' undersigned attorney during the telephone interview of June 14, 2007. During that interview, the final Office Action was discussed in conjunction with the primary reference of Lax. During that conversation, the Examiner and Applicants' attorney reached agreement on a proposed Amendment to claim 1 that would distinguish claim 1 from the cited art. Further, the Examiner indicated that similar amendments to the remaining independent claims would also distinguish them from the cited art. The Examiner did note that while the proposed amendments would distinguish the claims over the presently cited art, the amendments raise new issues that would require further searching on his part. The Examiner also indicated that it would be necessary to file a Request For Continued Examination along with any Amendment filed in response to the final Office Action in order to ensure that the Amendment is entered.

Accordingly, the independent claims of the present application, that is, claims 1, 39, 66, 96, 107, 108, 109, 110, 122, 123 and 127, respectively, have been amended herein in order to incorporate the language agreed to by the Examiner. In addition, the present Amendment is being submitted with an RCE. Specifically, for example, claim 1 has been amended herein in order to specify that "the locking member is permanently connected to the lockable container". As the Examiner concedes, the Lax reference does not show or suggest a lockable container that includes this feature.

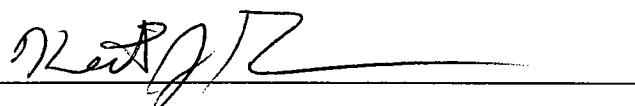
Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that all of the independent claims, that is claims 1, 39, 66, 96, 107, 108, 109, 110, 122, 123 and 127, as amended herein, are patentable over the cited art and are in condition for allowance. The remaining claims, that is, claims 2-38, 40-65, 67-95, 111-121, 124-126 and 128-130 depend from the independent claims, either directly or indirectly. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that these claims are also patentable over the cited art for reasons at least similar to those described above.

In light of the remarks and amendments made herein, it is respectfully submitted that claims 1-96 and 107-130 are patentable over the cited art and are in condition for allowance.

Favorable reconsideration of the present application is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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